

American Opinion Summary

Permanent file copy
Do not remove

Department of State

No. 118

November 19, 1962

KENNEDY-ADENAUER TALKS

The "harmony of views" on Berlin and other topics reached by President Kennedy and Chancellor Adenauer is "welcome" news to editors, although several remark that the final communique was "not especially communicative" (Wash. News and Star; N.Y. Herald Tribune).

There is general approval of their apparent decision to take no new initiative in solving the Berlin problem until the Cuban crisis is fully resolved. This is a "wise if negative decision," says the New York Times. Further "firmness" on our part seems "more advisable every day" as the Soviet-Cuban "stall on jet bombers goes on," comments the Philadelphia Inquirer. Hearst's New York Journal-American firmly endorses Dr. Adenauer's position that "no Cuban settlement can be satisfactory unless it includes ON-SITE inspection" to guarantee withdrawal of Soviet missiles.

But hope persists that a satisfactory Cuban settlement may open the way for wider negotiations, including the "paramount issues" of Berlin and disarmament. Here some "flexibility" may be desirable, the Inquirer and several others agree. Western statesmen "would be foolish to shrug off new sounds emanating from Moscow in which emphasis is on settlements based on honorable compromise and reasonable mutual concessions," the New York Post asserts.

With respect to Berlin, some see signs of a "more flexible approach" on Adenauer's part to the idea of a multi-nation access authority with East German participation (e.g., N.Y. Times and Herald Tribune, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Business Week). The Christian Science Monitor, noting that Dr. Adenauer hopes this might win a few freedoms for the East German people, observes; "Such a point of view betokens a new realism and has elements of hope."

The President "deserves to get a pledge" from Dr. Adenauer to "snap the German units in NATO to an unquestioned state of preparedness," declares the Providence Journal. The New York Times similarly holds that the mutual pledge to defend Berlin requires that the European allies, including Germany, "step up their contributions to NATO."